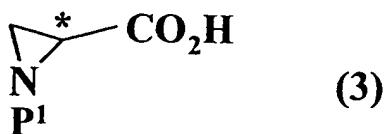


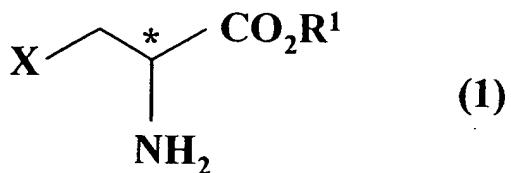
IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Original) A process for producing an optically active N-protected-aziridine-2-carboxylic acid represented by the following formula (3):

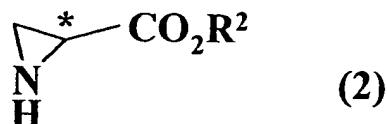


wherein * represents the position of an asymmetric carbon atom; and P¹ represents a benzenesulfonyl group substituted by nitro at the 2- and/or 4-positions; or its salt characterized by comprising subjecting an optically active 3-haloalanine derivative represented by the following formula (1):



wherein X represents a halogen atom; R¹ represents a hydrogen atom or a monovalent organic group which is involved in a structure represented by O₂R¹ and thus is capable of serving as an ester type protective group of a carboxyl group; and * is represents the position of an asymmetric carbon atom;

to an intramolecular cyclization reaction in the presence of a base followed by, if needed, ester hydrolysis to give an optically active aziridine-2-carboxylic acid derivative represented by the following formula (2):



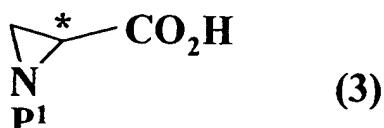
wherein * is as defined above; and R^2 has the same meaning as R^1 as defined above;

or its salt while maintaining the configuration at the 2-position, and then protecting the amino group followed by, if needed, ester hydrolysis.

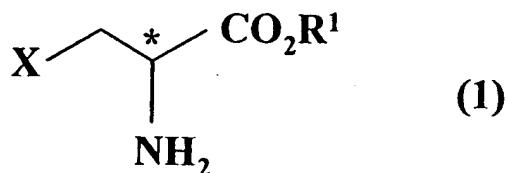
2. (Original) The production process as claimed in claim 1, wherein P^1 in the formula (3) is a 2-nitrobenzenesulfonyl group or a 4-nitrobenzenesulfonyl group.

3. (Original) A production process as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein X in the formula (1) is a chlorine atom.

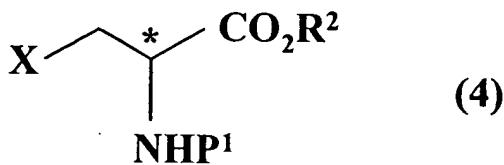
4. (Currently Amended) A process for producing an optically active N-protected-aziridine-2-carboxylic acid represented by the following formula (3):



wherein P^1 represents a benzenesulfonyl group substituted by
nitro at the 2- and/or 4- positions and * represents the position
of an asymmetric carbon atom are each as defined above;
or its salt characterized by protecting the amino group of an
optically active 3-haloalanine derivative represented by the
following formula (1):



wherein X represents a halogen atom; R¹ represents a hydrogen atom or a monovalent organic group which is involved in a structure represented by O₂R¹ and thus is capable of serving as an ester type protective group of a carboxyl group, R^x and * are each is as defined above; or its salt followed by, if needed, ester hydrolysis to give an optically active N-protected -haloalanine derivative represented by the following formula (4):



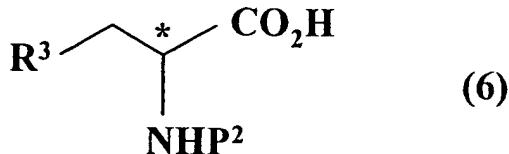
wherein X and * are each as defined above; R² has the same meaning as R¹ as defined above; and P¹ is the same as P¹ in the above formula (3);

reaction in the presence of a base followed by, if needed, ester hydrolysis.

5. (Original) The production process as claimed in claim 4, wherein X in the formula (1) is a chlorine atom.

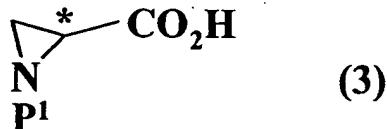
6. (Original) A production process as claimed in claim 4 or 5, wherein P¹ in the formula (4) is a 2-nitrobenzenesulfonyl group or a 4-nitrobenzenesulfonyl group.

7. (Currently Amended) A process for producing an optically active amino acid derivative represented by the following formula (6):



wherein R³ represents an optionally substituted cyclic or noncyclic alkyl group having 1 to 30 carbon atoms, an optionally substituted aralkyl group having 7 to 30 carbon atoms, an optionally substituted aryl group having 6 to 30 carbon atoms, an optionally substituted alkenyl group having 2 to 30 carbon atoms, or an optionally substituted alkynyl group having 2 to 30 carbon atoms; and P² represents a benzenesulfonyl group substituted by

nitro at the 2- and/or 4-positions or represents a hydrogen atom; or its salt characterized by comprising treating an optically active N-protected-aziridine-2-carboxylic acid represented by the following formula (3) which is produced by a method as claimed in any of claims 1 to 6 claims 1, 2, 4 or 5:



wherein P^1 represents a benzenesulfonyl group substituted by nitro at the 2- and/or 4-positions and * are each is as defined above; or its salt with an organic metal reagent represented by the following formula (5):



wherein R^3 is as defined above; and M represents an atomic group containing an alkali metal atom or an alkaline earth metal atom or an atomic group containing a zinc ion; followed by, if needed, deblocking.

8. (Original) The production process as claimed in claim 7, wherein M in the formula (5) is lithium, sodium, $MgCl$, $MgBr$, $ZnCl$ or $ZnBr$.

9. (Currently Amended) A production process as claimed in claim 7 or 8, wherein said deblocking is performed with the use of a thiol compound represented by the following formula (7):



wherein R^4 represents an optionally substituted alkyl group having 1 to 30 carbon atoms, an optionally substituted aralkyl group having 7 to 30 carbon atoms, or an optionally substituted aryl group having 6 to 30 carbon atoms;

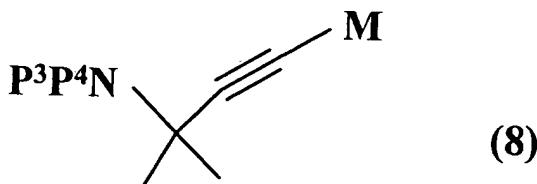
to give a compound represented by the formula (6) wherein P^2 is a hydrogen atom.

10. (Original) The production process as claimed in claim 9, wherein said thiol compound represented by the formula (7) is thiophenol.

11. (Currently Amended) A production process as claimed in claim 7 or 8, wherein said deblocking is performed with the use of a metal alkoxide to give a compound represented by the formula (6) wherein P^2 is a hydrogen atom.

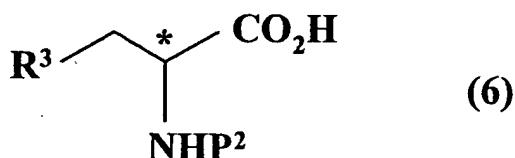
12. (Original) The production process as claimed in claim 11, wherein said metal alkoxide is an alkali metal alkoxide.

13. (Currently Amended) A production process as claimed in ~~any of claims 7 to 12~~ claim 7, wherein a metal acetylide represented by the following formula (8):



15. (Currently Amended) A production process as claimed in claim 13 or 14, wherein P³ and P⁴ in the formulae (8) and (10) respectively represent a hydrogen atom and a benzyl group.

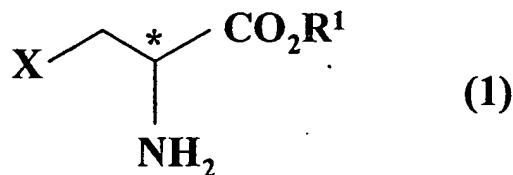
16. (Currently Amended) A process for producing an optically active amino acid derivative represented by the following formula (6):



wherein R³ represents an optionally substituted cyclic or noncyclic alkyl group having 1 to 30 carbon atoms, an optionally substituted aralkyl group having 7 to 30 carbon atoms, an optionally substituted aryl group having 6 to 30 carbon atoms, an optionally substituted alkenyl group having 2 to 30 carbon atoms,

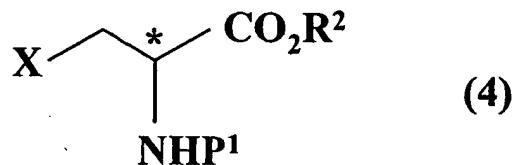
or an optionally substituted alkynyl group having 2 to 30 carbon atoms; and P² represents a benzenesulfonyl group substituted by nitro at the 2- and/or 4-positions or hydrogen atom are each as defined above;

or its salt characterized by comprising protecting the amino group of an optically active 3-haloalanine derivative represented by the following formula (1):



wherein X, R², * are each as defined above; wherein X represents a halogen atom; R¹ represents a hydrogen atom or a monovalent organic group which is involved in a structure represented by O, R¹ and thus is capable of serving as an ester type protective group of a carboxyl group; and * represents the position of an asymmetric carbon atom;

or its salt followed by, if needed, ester hydrolysis to give an optically active N-protected-3-haloalanine derivative represented by the following formula (4):



wherein X, R² and * are each as defined above and R² has the same meaning as R¹;

or its salt, and then treating it with an organic metal reagent represented by the following formula (5):



wherein R³ is as defined above;
followed by, if needed, deblocking and/or ester hydrolysis.

17. (Original) (The production process as claimed in claim 16, wherein X in the formula (1) is a chlorine atom.

18. (Original) A production process as claimed in claim 16 or 17, wherein M in the formula (5) is lithium, sodium, MgCl, MgBr, ZnCl or Zn Br.

19. (Currently Amended) A production process as claimed in ~~any of claims 16 to 18~~ claim 16 or 17, wherein said deblocking is performed with the use of a thiol compound represented by the following formula (7):



wherein R^4 is as defined above;

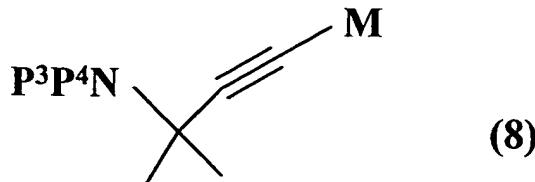
to give a compound represented by the formula (6) wherein P^2 is a hydrogen atom.

20. (Original) The production process as claimed in claim 19, wherein said thiol compound represented by the formula (7) is thiophenol.

21. (Currently Amended) A production process as claimed in ~~any of claims 16 to 18~~ claim 16 or 17, wherein said deblocking is performed with the use of a metal alkoxide to give a compound represented by the formula (6) wherein P^2 is a hydrogen atom.

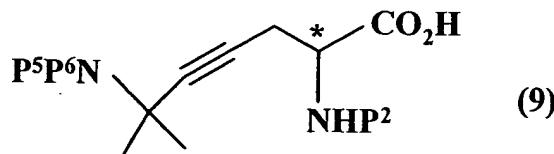
22. (Original) The production process as claimed in claim 21, wherein said metal alkoxide is an alkali metal alkoxide.

23. (Currently Amended) A production process as claimed in any of claims 16 to 22 claim 16 or 17, wherein a metal acetylide represented by the following formula (8):



wherein M, P³ and P⁴ are each as defined above;

is used as said organic metal reagent represented by the formula (5) to give an optically active amino acid derivative represented by the following formula (9):

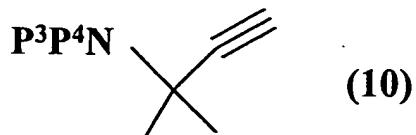


wherein P², P⁵, P⁶ and * are each as defined above;

or its salt as the compound represented by the formula (6).

24. (Original) The production process as claimed in claim 23, wherein said metal acetylide represented by the formula (8) is prepared by treating an optionally protected 3,3-

dimethylpropargylamine represented by the following formula (10):

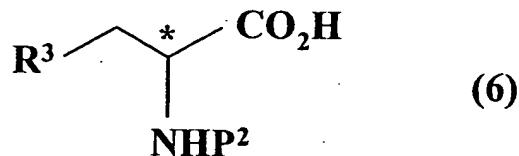


wherein P^3 and P^4 are each as defined above;
with at least one member selected from among organic lithium,
organic lithium amide, a Grignard reagent and organic magnesium
amide.

25. (Currently Amended) A production process as claimed in claim 23 or 24, wherein P³ and P⁴ in the formula (8) respectively represent a hydrogen atom and a benzyl group.

26-34 (Cancelled)

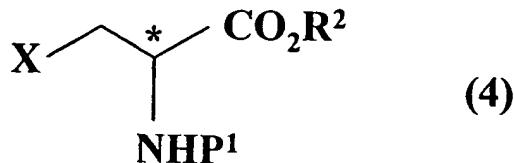
35. (Currently Amended) A process for producing an optically active amino acid derivative represented by the following formula (6):



wherein R³ represents an optionally substituted cyclic or noncyclic alkyl group having 1 to 30 carbon atoms, an optionally substituted aralkyl group having 7 to 30 carbon atoms, an optionally substituted aryl group having 6 to 30 carbon atoms, an optionally substituted alkenyl group having 2 to 30 carbon atoms, or an optionally substituted alkynyl group having 2 to 30 carbon atoms.

atoms; and P² represents a benzenesulfonyl group substituted by nitro at the 2- and/or 4-positions or hydrogen atom are each as defined above;

or its salt characterized by comprising treating an optically active N-protected-3-haloalanine derivative represented by the following formula (4):



wherein X, R¹, P¹ and * are each as defined above wherein X represents a halogen atom; R² represents a hydrogen atom or a monovalent organic group which is involved in a structure represented by O₂R² and thus is capable of serving as an ester type protective group of a carboxyl group; and * represents the position of an asymmetric carbon atom and P¹ represents a benzene sulfonyl group substituted by nitro at the 2- and/or 4-positions;

or its salt with an organic metal reagent represented by the following formula (5):



wherein R³ and M are each is as defined above and M represents an atomic group containing an alkali metal atom or an alkaline earth metal atom or an atomic group containing a zinc ion; followed by, if needed, deblocking and/or ester hydrolysis.

36. (Original) The production process as claimed in claim 35, wherein X in the formula (4) is a chlorine atom.

37. (Original) A production process as claimed in claim 35 or 36, wherein M in the formula (5) is lithium, sodium, MgCl, MgBr, ZnCl or Zn Br.

38. (Currently Amended) A production process as claimed in any of claims 35 to 37 claim 35 or 36, wherein said deblocking is performed with the use of a thiol compound represented by the following formula (7):



wherein R^4 is as defined above;

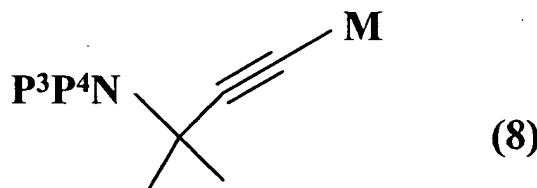
to give a compound represented by the formula (6) wherein P^2 is a hydrogen atom.

39. (Original) The production process as claimed in claim 38, wherein said thiol compound represented by the formula (7) is thiophenol.

40. (Currently Amended) A production process as claimed in any of claims 35 to 37 claim 35 or 36, wherein said deblocking is performed with the use of a metal alkoxide to give a compound represented by the formula (6) wherein P^2 is a hydrogen atom.

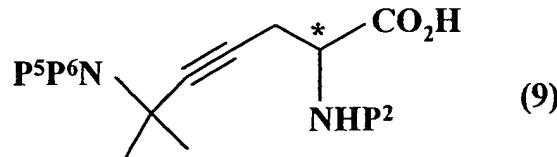
41. (Original) The production process as claimed in claim 40, wherein said metal alkoxide is an alkali metal alkoxide.

42. (Currently Amended) A production process as claimed in any of claims 35 to 41 claim 35 or 36, wherein a metal acetylide represented by the following formula (8):



wherein M , P^3 and P^4 are each as defined above;

is used as said organic metal reagent represented by the formula (5) to give an optically active amino acid derivative represented by the following formula (9):



wherein P^2 , P^5 , P^6 and $*$ are each as defined above;

or its salt as the compound represented by the formula (6).

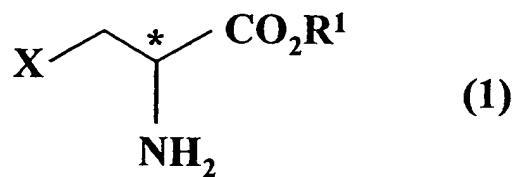
43. (Original) The production process as claimed in claim 23, wherein said metal acetylide represented by the formula (8) is prepared by treating an optionally protected 3,3-dimethylpropargylamine represented by the following formula (10):



wherein P³ and P⁴ are each as defined above;
 with at least one member selected from among organic lithium,
 organic lithium amide, a Grignard reagent and organic magnesium
 amide.

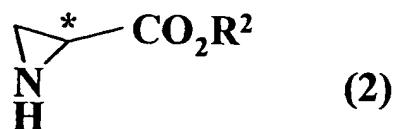
44. (Currently Amended) A production process as claimed in claim 42 or 43, wherein P³ and P⁴ in the formula (8) respectively represent a hydrogen atom and a benzyl group.

45. (Currently Amended) A process for producing an optically active aziridine-2-carboxylic acid derivative or its salt which comprises using an optically active 3-haloalanine derivative represented by the following formula (1):



wherein X, R¹ and * are each as defined above wherein X represents a halogen atom; R¹ represents a hydrogen atom or a monovalent organic group which is involved in a structure

represented by O_2R^1 and thus is capable of serving as an ester type protective group of a carboxyl group; and * represents the position of an asymmetric carbon atom;
or its salt in the presence of a base to give an optically active aziridine-2-carboxylic acid derivative represented by the following formula (2):

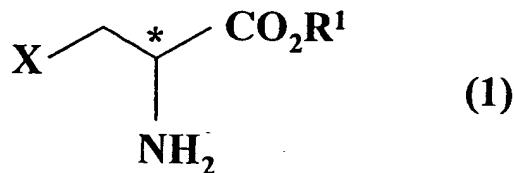


wherein R^2 has the same meaning as R^1 and * are each is as defined above;
or its salt, characterized by, using an alkali metal hydroxide or an alkaline earth metal hydroxide as the base, performing an intramolecular cyclization reaction in the presence of water at a temperature of 70°C or higher followed by, if needed, ester hydrolysis.

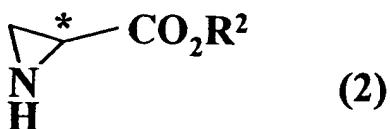
46. (Original) The production process as claimed in claim 45, wherein said base is an alkali metal hydroxide.

47. (Original) A production process as claimed in claim 45 or 46, wherein said optically active 3-haloalanine derivative or its salt is added to a mixture containing water and a base.

48. (Currently Amended) A process for producing an optically active aziridine-2-carboxylic acid derivative or its salt which comprises using an optically active 3-haloalanine derivative represented by the following formula (1):



wherein X, R¹ and * are each as defined above wherein X represents a halogen atom; R¹ represents a hydrogen atom or a monovalent organic group which is involved in a structure represented by O₂R¹ and thus is capable of serving as an ester type protective group of a carboxyl group; and * represents the position of an asymmetric carbon atom; or its salt in the presence of a base to give an optically active aziridine-2-carboxylic acid derivative represented by the following formula (2):

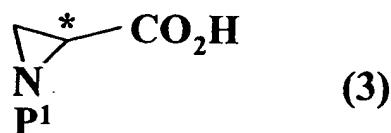


wherein R² has the same meaning as R¹ and * are each as defined above; or its salt, characterized by, using an amine as the base, performing an intramolecular cyclization reaction followed by, if

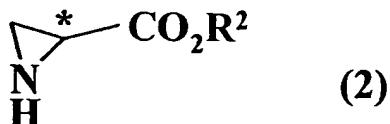
needed, ester hydrolysis.

49. (Original) The production process as claimed in claim 48, wherein said amine is an aliphatic amine.

50. (Currently Amended) A process for producing an optically active N-protected-aziridine-2-carboxylic acid represented by the following formula (3):



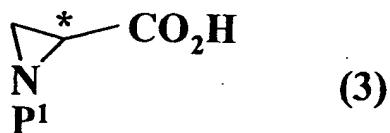
wherein P¹ represents a benzene sulfonyl group substituted by nitro at the 2- and/or 4- positions and * are each as defined above represents the position of an asymmetric carbon atom; or its salt characterized by comprising treating an optically active aziridine-2-carboxylic acid derivative represented by the following formula (2) which is produced by a method as claimed in any of claims 45 to 49 claim 45 or 46:



wherein R² represents a hydrogen atom or a monovalent organic group which is involved in a structure represented by -CO₂R² and thus is capable of serving as an ester type protective group of a carboxyl group and * are each as defined above;

with benzenesulfonyl chloride p substituted by nitro at the 2- and/or 4-positions followed by, if needed, ester hydrolysis.

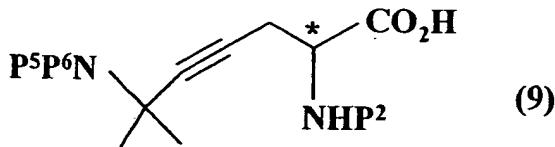
51. (Currently Amended) An optically active N-protected-aziridine-2-carboxylic acid represented by the following formula (3) :



wherein P^1 represents a benzenesulfonyl group substituted by nitro at the 2- and/or 4-positions and * represents the position of an asymmetric carbon atom are each as defined above; or its salt.

52. (Original) A compound as claimed in claim 51, wherein P^1 is a 2-nitrobenzenesulfonyl group or a 4-nitrobenzenesulfonyl group.

53. (Currently Amended) An optically active amino acid derivative represented by the following formula (9) :



wherein P^2 represents a benzenesulfonyl group substituted by nitro at the 2- and/or 4-positions or hydrogen atom, P^5 [,] and P^6

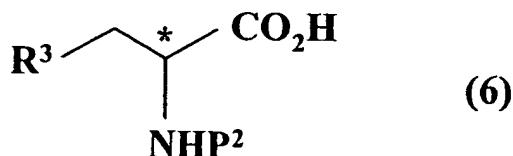
independently represent each a hydrogen atom or an amino-protective group, or P^5 and P^6 form together an amino-protective group and * are each as defined above represents the position of an asymmetric carbon atom;
or its salt.

54. (Original) A compound as claimed in claim 53, wherein p² is a 2-nitrobenzenesulfonyl group or a 4-nitrobenzenesulfonyl group.

55. (Original) A compound as claimed in claim 53, wherein p² is a hydrogen atom.

56. (Original) A compound as claimed in any of claims 53 to 55, wherein P^5 is a hydrogen atom and P^6 is a benzyl group.

57. (Currently Amended) A process for crystallizing a compound represented by the following formula (6):



wherein R³ represents an optionally substituted cyclic or noncyclic alkyl group having 1 to 30 carbon atoms, an optionally

substituted aralkyl group having 7 to 30 carbon atoms, an
optionally substituted aryl group having 6 to 30 carbon atoms, an
optionally substituted alkenyl group having 2 to 30 carbon atoms,
or an optionally substituted alkynyl group having 2 to 30 carbon
atoms is as defined above;
characterized by comprising neutralizing with an acid an aqueous solution containing an N-protected optically active amino acid derivative salt represented by the formula (6) wherein P² is a 2-nitrobenzenesulfonyl group or a 4-nitrobenzenesulfonyl group and thus crystallizing to thereby give the compound of the formula (6) in free state.

58. (Original) The crystallization process as claimed in claim 57, wherein said N-protected amino acid derivative salt is an alkali metal salt.

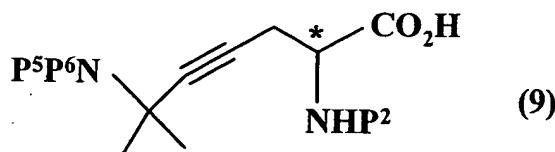
59. (Original) The crystallization process as claimed in claim 58, wherein said alkali metal salt is a lithium salt.

60. (Original) A crystallization process as claimed in any of claims 57 to 59, wherein said acid is a halogenated hydroacid.

61. (Original) The crystallization process as claimed in claim 60, wherein said halogenated hydroacid is hydrogen chloride.

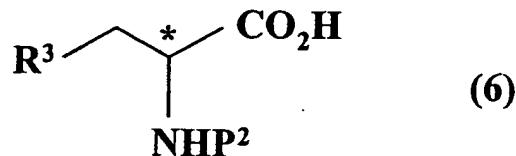
62. (Currently Amended) A crystallization process as claimed in any of claims 57 to 61 59, wherein the reaction is performed in the coexistence of an organic solvent compatible with water.

63. (Currently Amended) A crystallization process as claimed in any of claims 57 to 62 59, wherein said compound represented by the formula (6) is an N-protected optically active amino acid derivative salt represented by the following formula (9):



wherein P^2 represents a 2-nitrobenzenesulfonyl group or a 4-nitrobenzenesulfonyl group; and P^5 , P^6 and * are each as defined above.

64. (Currently Amended) A process for crystallizing a compound represented by the following formula (6):



wherein R^3 represents an optionally substituted cyclic or

noncyclic alkyl group having 1 to 30 carbon atoms, an optionally substituted aralkyl group having 7 to 30 carbon atoms, an optionally substituted aryl group having 6 to 30 carbon atoms, an optionally substituted alkenyl group having 2 to 30 carbon atoms, or an optionally substituted alkynyl group having 2 to 30 carbon atoms; is as defined above and * represents the position of an asymmetric carbon atom;

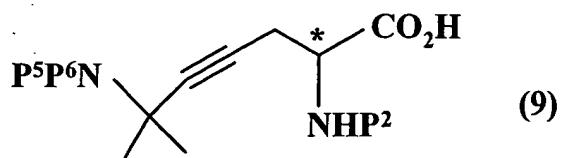
characterized by comprising salting out with a halogenated alkali metal salt an aqueous solution containing an alkali metal salt of an optically active amino acid derivative represented by the formula (6) wherein P² is hydrogen atom to thereby give an alkali metal salt of the compound (6).

65. (Original) The crystallization process as claimed in claim 64, wherein said alkali metal salt of an optically active amino acid derivative is a lithium salt.

66. (Original) A crystallization process as claimed in claim 64 or 65, wherein said halogenated alkali metal salt is lithium chloride.

67. (Currently Amended) A crystallization process as claimed in any of claims 64 to 66 claim 64 or 65, wherein the reaction is performed in the coexistence of an organic solvent compatible with water.

68. (Currently Amended) A crystallization process as claimed in ~~any of claims 64 to 67~~ claim 64 or 65, wherein said compound represented by the formula (6) is an optically active amino acid derivative salt represented by the following formula (9):



wherein P^2 represents a hydrogen atom; and P^5 , P^6 and * are each as defined above.